

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 AGR-10 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 COME-00 FRB-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-02 SP-02

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TO USMISSION EC BRUSSELS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, ETRD

SUBJECT: FRENCH FOOD AID TO SRI LANKA

REF: EC BRU 6257

1. US HAS NO OBJECTION PROPOSED WHEAT FLOUR ASSISTANCE TO SRI LANKA, BUT WE DO HAVE SOME OBSERVATIONS CONCERNING LEVEL OF USUAL MARKETING REQUIREMENT.

2. PRESENT US PL 480 TITLE I AGREEMENT WITH SRI LANKA INCLUDES UMR OF 100,000 MT WHEAT FLOUR THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 1976. IF ALL OF FRENCH FLOUR IS TO BE PRO-UNCLASSIFIED

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VIDED IN JULY 1976 WE SUGGEST THIS UMR BE USED. WE NOTE

FROM CCP/CSD DOCUMENT NUMBER 76/91 THAT GOVERNMENT OF CANADA PROPOSES SUPPLY SRI LANKA WITH WHEAT FLOUR IN AUGUST 1976 AND PROPOSES UMR OF 100,000 MT, THE PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED LEVEL.

3. IF FRENCH PREFER TO ESTABLISH NEW, ANNUAL UMR, US AGREES WITH FRANCE THAT LEVEL SHOULD BE BELOW FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE OF COMMERCIAL IMPORTS BY SRI LANKA, SINCE THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES WHICH DICTATED LOWER LEVEL IN PAST CONTINUE. (FYI: IN 1976 DONOR COUNTRIES AGREED TO CUT SRI LANKA UMR TO ARTIFICIALLY LOW LEVEL OF

50,000 MT FLOUR. THIS LEVEL CONTINUED IN 1973 AND 1974, WAS INCREASED TO 72,000 MT FLOUR IN 1975 AND 100,000 MT FLOUR IN 1976).

4. HOWEVER, WE VIEW PROPOSED 250,000 MT LEVEL (NOTIFICATION DOES NOT SPECIFY WHETHER THIS IS A FLOUR OR A GRAIN EQUIVALENT FIGURE) AS TOO PRECIPITOUS A JUMP FROM PRESENT UMR. US SUGGESTS NEW LEVEL BE NO HIGHER THAN 150,000 METRIC TONS WHEAT FLOUR (I.E., 199,500 MT WHEAT GRAIN EQUIVALENT AT EXTRACTION RATE OF 1.33). THE 150,000 FIGURE WOULD CONTINUE THE INCREMENTAL INCREASES AIMING TOWARD EVENTUAL RESTORATION OF A FIVE-YEAR AVERAGE UMR. AT SAME TIME IT RECOGNIZES CONTINUING FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES AND STILL ENABLES SRI LANKA TO SEEK CONCESSIONAL IMPORTS FROM DONORS THUS DERIVING GREATER BALANCE OF PAYMENTS RELIEF. KISSINGER

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